DINOSAUR FOOTPRINTS NEAR BROOME

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In 1945 Mr. Walter Jones of Broome reported that whilst searching for shells at extreme low spring tide near Point Gantheaume Lighthouse he had noticed some impressions in the solid sandstone shaped like gigantic emu tracks approximately 13 inches in length. There were several sets of tracks as though creatures had been walking to and fro.

The importance of this discovery being realised Mr. Jones was asked to take impressions so that the tracks might be studied. Mr. Jones did this and on December 11, 1945 Mrs. Jones delivered at the Museum an excellent reproduction in cement of one of the footprints (G10328). Mr. Jones also supplied a rough sketch of the area showing the distribution of the tracks.

The impression, which suggests a rather fleshy foot, enabled the following measurements to be taken:—

Total length, 14⅞ in. (375 mm.).

To tip of left toe, 11½ in. (290 mm.).

To tip of right toe, 11¼ in. (282 mm.).

Length of middle toe, 9¾ in. (245 mm.).

Length of left toe, 6⅞ in. (173 mm.).

Length of right toe, 6⅜ in. (160 mm.).

Width of middle toe at base, 3 in. (75 mm.).

Distance between the tips of outer toes, 12⅜ in. (313 mm.).

Each toe ended in a stout blunt claw and seemed to consist of three phalanges, though this is a matter of doubt.

Efforts made to obtain additional material that might give a clue to the age of the beds were unsuccessful until recently when Captain B. E. Bardwell of Broome found plant remains in the associated strata. These on examination proved to be *Ptilophyllum pecten* (Phillips), a cycadophyte of almost worldwide range in Jurassic times, although it also occurs in the Cretaceous, having been recognised in the Maryborough and Burrum series of Queensland. In Western Australia the plant has been recorded from beds underlying the Cretaceous greensands at Gingin, where it is regarded by Walkom as being of Jurassic age.

Dinosaur footprints have been found in the Jurassic coal measures of Queensland on the Lanefield colliery.

Like the Gingin beds those containing the dinosaur footprints are considered to be of lacustrine origin. Although so recently brought to our knowledge the tracks have long been familiar to the aborigines, who have given them the name of warragunna, and who have a legend to account for their origin. The story is that a native walking along the beach noticed the tracks and at once began to

follow them. Suddenly a very large bird was seen trying to get across the bay in a southerly direction. When the bird turned and came towards him the native fled, not stopping until he reached "Willy's Creek," where his footprint can be seen.

REFERENCES

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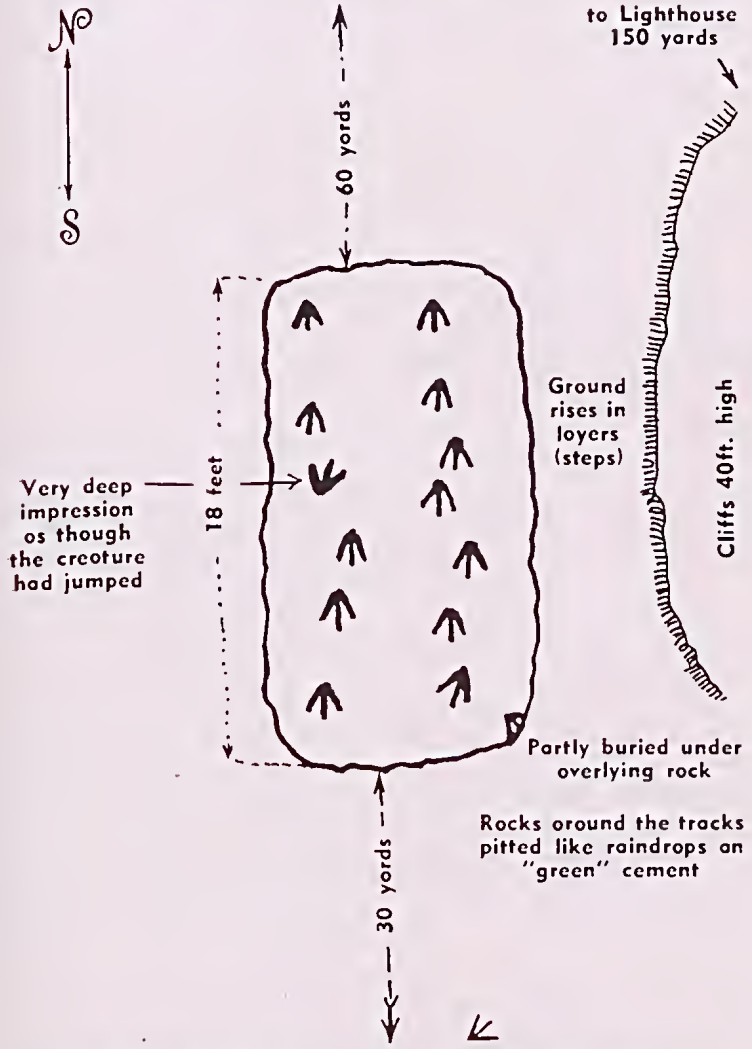

Copy of sketch by Mr. Jones; the arrows at the top and bottom point to footprints away from the main occurrence.